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of Fractur loses its cunning and the fading art ceases to exist in the memory of a generation yet living.

The establishment of the English school system in Bucks county in 1854¹ necessarily resulted in the suppression of the previously existing German schools. Hence that date after which the latter, sustained by private subscription, lingered on for a time, reasonably marks the end of Fractur in a region where at least two aged masters of the craft still survive in the person of Jacob Gross, of New Britain, and John H. Detweiler, of Perkasie.

A study of these fugitive examples of a venerated handwriting leads the investigator by sure steps from the Germany of Pennsylvania to the valley of the Rhine, from the backwoods schoolhouse to the mediæval cloister. In the fading leaflets we recognize prototypes of the glowing hand-made volumes that illuminated learning in the Middle Ages and still glorify the libraries of the Old World. From the paint-box of Bedminster to the priceless book which at Venice is shown to the delighted visitor as the handiwork of Hans Memling, we are led by a chain of intimately related facts. With strange sensations, we rescue from the Pennsylvanian garret evidence indisputable of the passing away in the New World of one of the fairest arts of the cloister, which, meeting its death-blow at the invention of printing, crossed the Atlantic to linger among the pious descendants of the German reformers until recent years.

Stated Meeting, October 1, 1897.

Mr. INGHAM in the Chair.

Present, 11 members.

Donations to the Library and Cabinet were reported, and thanks were ordered for them.

¹ A German school sustained by a private subscription was taught by the Mennonite Samuel Musselman, in Swartley's schoolhouse, at the lower end of Hilltown, Bucks county, Pa., about 1866. Information of Mr. J. F. Hendricks Doylestown. Another, the last in Bucks county, existed, under the tuition of Mr. Meyers, of Deep Run, at the old Mennonite Schoolhouse near the meeting house at Deep Run, Bucks county, Pa., in the winters of 1895-96 and 1896-97. At the latter school where a pair of the time-honored leathern spectacles (*Bocknbrille* or *Schulbrille*) now in possession of the Bucks County Historical Society, were used to punish children in 1897, the ceiling rafters are still inscribed with bars of music written in chalk.

The Committee on Mr. Van Denburgh's paper recommended its publication in the *Transactions*, and it was so ordered.

The meeting was adjourned by the presiding officer.

Special Meeting, October 11, 1897.

Vice-President PEPPER in the Chair.

Present, 41 members.

The special meeting was called by the President for the reception of communications on subjects of science.

Lord Kelvin was presented to the Chair, and took his seat in the Society.

Communications were made by Prof. Heilprin on "The Absence of Glacial Action in Northern Africa."

By Prof. G. F. Barker, on "The Constitution of Matter."

By Prof. Doolittle, on "Latitude Variation."

By Dr. Kennelly, on "A Speculation upon the Nature of Cathode Rays."

By Dr. D. G. Brinton, on "The Measurement of Thought as Function."

The meeting was adjourned by the Chair.

THE VARIATION OF TERRESTRIAL LATITUDE.

BY C. L. DOOLITTLE.

(*Read October 11, 1897.*)

As the distinguished scientist with whose presence we are favored this evening has on various public occasions shown a deep interest in the problem of latitude variation, it has occurred to me that a brief communication on this subject might not be out of place on